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Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 61/56, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultations with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 46/30, taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to his report of 10 October 1990 (A/45/435) or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In paragraph 11 of the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session a report on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. On 16 February 2007, a note verbale was sent to all Member States drawing their attention to paragraph 10 of resolution 61/56 and seeking their views on the matter. Replies, which have been received from Canada, Chile, Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, the Russian Federation, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Kingdom, are reproduced in section III below. Replies subsequently received from other Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Observations

3. The issue of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East remains important. It is recalled that, at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held from 30 April to 11 May 2007 in Vienna, States parties reiterated their support for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, reaffirmed the importance of the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and recognized that the resolution remained valid until its goals and objectives were achieved.

4. The Secretary-General has continued to carry out various consultations with concerned parties within and outside the region in order to explore further ways and means of promoting the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Secretary-General is concerned that certain developments in the region since his previous report on the subject of 13 July 2006 (A/61/140 (Part I)) could have had a further impact on efforts towards the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

5. The Secretary-General underlines that efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace continue to be needed. He hopes that conditions will soon be met to define a political horizon in the Middle East peace process, within the framework of the Road Map developed by the Quartet of the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Nations. He welcomes the constructive role played by the League of Arab States. The Secretary-General calls upon all concerned parties within and outside the region to resume dialogue with a view to creating stable security conditions and an eventual settlement that would facilitate the process of establishing a zone free of nuclear

weapons in the Middle East. The Secretary-General reiterates the continued readiness of the United Nations to provide any assistance deemed helpful in that regard.

III. Replies received from Governments

Canada

[Original: English]
[13 June 2007]

1. At the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, Canada supported resolution 61/56 calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In addition, Canada co-sponsored the resolution entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons" and voted in favour of the resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon free world". Canada has called for full adherence to and compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by States parties in the region. At the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Canada actively supported the adoption of a resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East by the IAEA General Conference in 2005 and 2006. Canada has also urged the three States[1] in the region that have not signed or ratified comprehensive safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency to do so as soon as possible. Canada has appealed to all States in the region to contribute further to regional stability and security by concluding additional protocols to their respective safeguards agreements, thereby demonstrating greater openness and transparency. With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Canada supported the relevant resolution at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, and has encouraged coordinated ratification of the Treaty by the three Annex 2 signatories in the region — Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Israel. At the 2005 Treaty entry-into-force Conference and the 2006 "Friends of the CTBT" ministerial event, Canada championed a proposal calling on those three signatories to coordinate their ratification of the Treaty as a confidence-building measure.

2. Canada shares the serious international concerns about the scope and nature of the past and ongoing nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Canada, along with our Group of Eight (G-8) partner countries, jointly issued a statement on non-proliferation at the June 2007 G-8 meeting in Heiligendamm, noting that all G-8 countries, including Canada, "remain united in our commitment to resolve the proliferation concerns posed by Iran's nuclear programme". Although Canada recognizes that the Islamic Republic of Iran has a right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, we also note that that country has lost the confidence of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council through its two-decade history of concealing nuclear activities. In the light of that history, as well as of the failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide any plausible justification for its efforts to acquire the full nuclear fuel cycle, Canada fully supports Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007). Those resolutions clearly state the international community's desire for a negotiated diplomatic solution

[1] Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (signed on 16 June 2005 but not in force).

which respects the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to peaceful uses of nuclear energy while ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. In a statement delivered on 24 March 2007, Canada's Foreign Minister urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with the international obligations set out by the Security Council, including the full and verified suspension of all enrichment, reprocessing and heavy-water-related activities. He reminded the Islamic Republic of Iran that doing so is key to the Security Council suspending measures against it and opening the way for negotiations on a mutually acceptable political settlement. He also noted that it is vital that the Islamic Republic of Iran extend its full cooperation to the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is only through such cooperation that the Islamic Republic of Iran can raise confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. As part of that process, the Islamic Republic of Iran must recommit itself to the resolution of all outstanding questions and concerns and to full compliance with its obligations under the non-proliferation regime. Canada urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate fully and transparently with IAEA in the implementation of Non-Proliferation Treaty safeguards and to provide the additional transparency and access measures that have been requested of it. Canada also urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to resume its provisional application of the additional protocol until such time as the additional protocol is ratified by the Islamic Republic of Iran and enters into force.

3. Canada has called on all remaining States not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to join as non-nuclear-weapon States. As a confidence-building measure in advance of that ultimate goal, Canada has also called on those same States to separate their civilian and military fuel cycles and to place all civilian nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards. These statements are in conformity with both the policies and the actions of the Canadian Government, which include Canada's voting record at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the resolutions mentioned in paragraph 1 above. It also conforms with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which calls on all States to promote the universal adoption and full implementation of multilateral treaties whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2007]

1. In the context of expanding and increasing the number of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Chile supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important means of significantly strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime in all its aspects, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security.

2. At the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico City from 26 to 28 April 2005, Chile supported the initiative to create effective and realistic mechanisms that would promote the establishment of structures for adequate coordination, information-

sharing and the exchange of similar and useful experiences among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and eventual future zones, including the Middle East.

3. It should be noted that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to which Chile is a party and which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, has become a model for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world, such as the South Pacific (Treaty of Rarotonga), South-East Asia (Treaty of Bangkok) and Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba). Once they enter into force, these treaties will cover over half the world's countries and all the territories in the southern hemisphere.

4. Another major step forward was taken on 8 September 2006 with the signature, in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, of the Treaty on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, to which Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are parties.

5. At the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna from 30 April to 11 May 2007, Chile reiterated its position, during the discussion on the 1995 resolution concerning the Middle East, that a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be established in the Middle East. To that end, all the countries concerned should accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2007]

1. Cuba has repeatedly stated, in international forums, its position of principle concerning nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, which is one of the highest priorities of Cuba's foreign policy. It has also expressed its concern about the threat which the continued existence of nuclear weapons poses to humanity, stressing the importance of pursuing non-proliferation efforts in parallel with efforts towards general and complete disarmament in relation to nuclear weapons.

2. For the achievement of this objective, the nuclear Powers have a fundamental responsibility to honour their unequivocal commitment to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, which represent the most serious threat to humanity's survival.

3. In this connection, Cuba has supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various countries or regions of the world as part of the effort to expedite nuclear non-proliferation and attain the objective of nuclear disarmament. It is important that these zones be formed on the basis of agreements freely negotiated among the States of the region concerned and that they include mechanisms for cooperation among the States parties and signatories to guarantee that the countries remain seriously committed to this goal.

4. Cuba supports the proposal to make the Middle East region a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in line with the wishes expressed by the overwhelming majority of the countries in the area and in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981)

and paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991), as well as other resolutions adopted by consensus by the General Assembly.

5. The establishment of such a zone, in addition to making an important contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament, would represent a milestone in the Middle East peace process. Israel, the only country in the region that has neither become nor stated its intention to become a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, should renounce the possession of nuclear weapons and place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, in line with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), in order to comply promptly and unconditionally with the just demands of the international community.

6. The statements made by the Prime Minister of Israel on 12 December 2006, admitting that Israel is a nuclear-weapon State, are of grave concern. Israel's acquisition of nuclear capabilities represents a threat to the security of neighbouring States and to peace in the region, which is already in turmoil.

7. Together with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Cuba reiterates the call for a complete and total ban on the transfer to Israel of nuclear equipment, information, material or facilities, as well as resources or implements for this purpose and the provision of nuclear-related scientific or technological assistance. In addition, it expresses its concern about the continued assistance and access afforded to Israeli nuclear scientists, which may have potentially serious negative consequences for security in the region.

8. It is common knowledge that Israel's ability to act with impunity in this regard is due in large part to the protection it enjoys from the Government of the United States of America in the Security Council and other international forums. That country has paralysed the Security Council by exercising its veto power 31 times against draft resolutions relating to the question of Palestine and by repeatedly threatening to make use of this antidemocratic and outdated privilege.

9. The occupation of Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq and the threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United States of America, and particularly that country's new "National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction", which for the first time envisages the use of nuclear weapons to respond to an enemy attack with conventional weapons, not only hinder the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, but also jeopardize the zones already established and strike a blow to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

10. In view of the critical situation now prevailing in the Middle East, Cuba reaffirms the ongoing responsibility of the United Nations, including the Security Council, with respect to peace and security in the region, including the solution of the question of Palestine.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[31 May 2007]

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone is a recognized regional means of strengthening regional and international peace and security. More important, such zones play an instrumental role in averting the threat of nuclear war. Such arrangements are in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

2. Three decades have elapsed since this idea was introduced for the very first time by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1974. The resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which have been consistently adopted without a vote by the General Assembly since 1980, reflect the importance of the realization of this noble idea in the vital region of the Middle East. The following paragraphs list the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in fulfilling the principles and objectives of the resolution on the "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" at three levels — national, regional and international — and include conclusions on the way ahead.

National measures

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran, by renouncing the possession of nuclear weapons and placing its nuclear facilities under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has shown its resolute determination to achieve the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Those actions underscore its undiminished support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, with the ultimate objective of securing a world free from nuclear weapons.

4. The Islamic Republic of Iran ratified the statute of IAEA in 1958 and, subsequently, in 1969 signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which its Parliament ratified in 1970. This process was furthered by the ratification of the IAEA safeguards agreement in 1973 and ultimately accomplished by the signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

5. In implementation of the obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, specifically articles II and III thereof, all of the nuclear facilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are devoted to peaceful purposes and are under the full-scope safeguards of IAEA. Furthermore, in order to contribute to the realization of a world free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran has also joined the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Regional measures

6. While supporting all measures taken to date to regionally develop the idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa and South-East Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone located entirely in the northern hemisphere in its

immediate neighbourhood, i.e., the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that such measures and attempts, if considered seriously and globally by States, will be a step towards promoting international peace and security for the whole world, as well as further strengthen the nuclear disarmament efforts. However, there are enough reasons to indicate that the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East is particularly significant, especially in the present circumstances.

7. Notwithstanding the global attempts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East, it is regrettable that, 30 years after the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution, initially proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no progress has been achieved towards its realization owing to the intransigent policy of the Israeli regime. Owing to the non-adherence of Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and, more important, the refusal of that regime to place its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the IAEA verification system, the realization of such a zone — a lofty and long-sought aspiration of the countries in the region — has yet to materialize. The irresponsible behaviour of that regime in this respect has put the establishment of such a zone in the region in the near future in serious doubt.

8. As the Final Document of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty shows, following the accession of several countries to the Treaty, all countries in the Middle East region, except for the Israeli regime, have become States parties to the Treaty. The Sixth Review Conference requested all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, the States of the Middle East and other interested States, to report, through the Conference and the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee meetings to be held in advance of the Conference, on the steps that have been taken to promote the achievement of such a zone and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

9. The next step is to take concrete measures towards securing the adherence of the Israeli regime to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to urge that regime strongly to adhere, without delay and without conditions, to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon party and to place all its nuclear-related facilities under the IAEA verification system.

10. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/52 of 8 December 2005, the Secretary-General will inform the Assembly of the result of his consultations with the countries in the region on the realization of the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It remains our conviction that the Secretary-General should dispatch his Special Envoy to the countries in the region for the required consultations with those countries to facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. At present, Israel is the only non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the region. Despite repeated calls by the international community, as demonstrated in the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference, related resolutions of the General Assembly, IAEA and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Israel, confident of the political and military support of the United States of America, has neither acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons nor placed its nuclear facilities under the full scope of IAEA

safeguards. Israel has not even declared its intention to accede to the Treaty. Israel's clandestine nuclear activities both seriously threaten regional peace and security and endanger the non-proliferation regime.

11. Unfortunately, the inaction imposed upon the Security Council over the past several decades in addressing the well-documented illicit nuclear-weapons programme of the Israeli regime has given that regime the audacity to explicitly acknowledge possession of nuclear weapons, as was divulged by the Israeli Prime Minister in an interview on German television on 12 December 2006, contradicting the long-sought idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Moreover, the Israeli regime's clandestine development and possession of nuclear weapons not only violate basic principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, but also clearly defy the demands and concerns of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States, showing consistent and obstinate disregard for the international community, which has, time and again, called on that regime to renounce nuclear weapons and accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

12. Considering the above-mentioned reasons, the Security Council should have fulfilled its Charter-based responsibility to address such a clear and serious threat to international peace and security and to take prompt and appropriate actions accordingly. The Israeli regime is the only obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Peace and stability cannot be achieved in the Middle East while the massive Israeli nuclear arsenal continues to threaten the region and beyond.

International measures

13. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in a positive response to the invitation of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties, has lent its unreserved support for the early establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and spared no effort to achieve that invaluable objective.

14. The decision of the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference reaffirms the political will of the international community regarding the importance of the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East.

15. The idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone as an important disarmament and confidence-building measure in the region of the Middle East was first initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1974, followed by the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly. Since 1980, the General Assembly has annually adopted, by consensus, a resolution on this issue. The repeated adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly is a manifestation of the global support for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Middle East through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

16. As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully committed to its international undertakings and believes that that international instrument is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to the Treaty, particularly in the region of the Middle East, would effectively ensure the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

17. The 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed the importance of the resolution on the Middle East. Owing to the significant provisions of the resolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other States in the region would expect it to be swiftly implemented, especially by the co-sponsors, i.e., the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern Ireland, as depositories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

18. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in its bilateral and multilateral disarmament dialogues with other Member States and, in particular, with some nuclear-weapon States and members of the European Union, has always urged them to make an active and non-discriminatory contribution towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

The way ahead

19. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the opinion that, pending the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no country in the region should develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing on their territories, or territories under their control, of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, and that they should refrain from actions that run counter to both the letter and the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international resolutions and documents relating to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

20. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Review Conferences have a significant role in the realization of such a zone in the Middle East. Such a zone could be realized through the establishment of a special body in the Review Conferences which would consider and recommend proposals for the introduction of ways and means, in terms of concrete recommendations, for urgent and practical steps for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

21. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the firm belief that an agreed plan of action and timetable for achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, especially with respect to the Middle East, should be a top priority on the agenda of all States parties to the Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapon States. There should be enough pressure on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all of its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards to pave the way for the long-sought-after goal of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

22. Finally, the unconditional adherence by Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the conclusion of a full-scope safeguard agreement with IAEA would, undoubtedly, lead to the early realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[16 May 2007]

Lebanon confirms the following:

1. Lebanon does not possess weapons of mass destruction and is opposed to recourse to the threat or use of such weapons.

2. Lebanon abides by the resolutions adopted by the United Nations concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East and is cooperating in respect of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It expresses its great concern with regard to the non-compliance of Israel with international law by virtue of its maintenance of a nuclear arsenal that constitutes a threat to all States of the region and therefore to international peace and security.

3. It supports and welcomes all initiatives aimed at achieving disarmament in general and particularly in the Middle East region and emphasizes the role of the United Nations in achieving that end.

4. It is developing laws and regulations to enable the monitoring of the export, transit and cross-border carriage of any type of weapons of mass destruction and related materials.

5. It provides no assistance of any kind to any group that endeavours to acquire, produce, possess, transport, loan or utilize nuclear or other weapons.

6. It participated actively in the twenty-fifth meeting of the technical committee concerned with the preparation of a draft treaty to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, which met in Cairo from 21 to 25 January 2007. It was agreed at the meeting that it was important for the Council of the League of Arab States to issue a decision specifying the steps to be taken during the next stage and stressing the threat of Israel's weapons of mass destruction to Arab national security as well as the great danger that Israel's space and missile activities posed to Arab national security.

7. The committee recommended that members should complete the study of the draft of the first protocol on nuclear materials and facilities (third reading), which was adopted by the subcommittee, and finish the fourth reading after amending, adding or deleting paragraphs and articles to the draft protocol.

8. The committee also recommended the drafting of an annex containing observations and recommendations regarding articles and paragraphs to be moved to the regulations annexed to the treaty, on the understanding that they should be updated after each meeting. It further recommended that the next meeting, to be held from 24 to 28 June 2007 under the chairmanship of the Sudan, should follow up on the recommendations of the twenty-fifth meeting, consider the "subsidiary arrangements" annex to the first protocol, consider the draft of the second protocol relative to chemical materials and facilities and take up other matters.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[5 June 2007]

1. We regard the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an important tool for strengthening international peace and security and improving the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

2. The Russian Federation supports the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as a matter of principle. We supported the resolution on the Middle East which was adopted in 1995 at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and reaffirmed in 2000, and we endorse the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

3. We continue to believe that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone would meet the long-term national interests of all the States in the region. We support the efforts of the Middle East States to establish such a zone. The strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the Middle East on the basis of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and the conversion of the region into a zone free of nuclear weapons — and, in the future, free of all types of weapons of mass destruction — are the most important elements in the establishment of a fundamentally new regional climate based on mutual trust, stability and security.

4. We believe that the practical implementation of the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East will become possible only when all the countries in the region have become participants in the regimes for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

5. We are convinced that the expansion of the safeguards activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency in all the countries of the region without exception should be only the first step towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It is important that the Agency safeguards are accepted in full, including the entry into force of additional protocols to the relevant safeguards agreements.

6. We support the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to benefit from the peaceful use of atomic energy on a non-discriminatory and equitable basis. This is the aim of the Russian initiative to establish international centres for the provision of enrichment services. We are ready to work on refining and combining all the existing proposals in this regard.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[15 May 2007]

61

Entitled: "The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East"

The Syrian Arab Republic has consistently affirmed its strong desire for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and expresses its deep concern at the insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of such a zone posed by Israel through its total refusal to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This refusal persists to the present day despite the international community's repeated admonitions that Israel's obduracy is doing great damage to the credibility and universality of the Treaty and effectively prevents the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East notwithstanding the good faith of the other parties involved and the proliferation of documents and texts submitted.

The Syrian Arab Republic is of the view that the measures and arrangements necessary for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as called for by United Nations resolutions would include the following:

1. Israel, the only State in the region to possess nuclear facilities and a nuclear stockpile, must accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and eliminate all its nuclear weapons. All of this constitutes a sine qua non for the establishment of such a zone. Israel must also comply with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) which explicitly demands that Israel urgently place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

2. The United Nations is the appropriate framework to provide a forum for earnest discussions by all Middle East States concerned with the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons.

In addition, the Syrian Arab Republic has spared no effort in its urgent pursuit of making the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons. The most recent of such efforts was the introduction of a draft resolution to the Security Council on 29 December 2003, in a genuine initiative and sincere effort to rid the region of such weapons. However, certain States which preach the opposite of what they practise blocked that initiative in order to protect Israel and continue to provide support for the development of its nuclear arsenal which threatens the security and stability of the region. The Syrian Arab Republic recalls that its draft resolution is still "in blue" in the Council archives, and calls on the Security Council to adopt it as swiftly as possible and ensure its implementation by all States of the region, without exception, in order to pave the way for the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons, particularly in light of statements by the Israeli Prime Minister about his country's possession of nuclear weapons, which constitute a threat to the peace and security of the Middle East and a violation of international resolutions and commitments regarding the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]
[30 April 2007]

1. The United Kingdom has consistently supported resolutions in the First Committee of the General Assembly calling for the establishment of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone. The United Kingdom also supports the First Committee resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. We continue to call upon Israel to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to conclude a full-scope safeguards agreement and additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We have recently reiterated those calls in meetings with Israeli officials.

2. The United Kingdom, with international partners, continues to seek ways to resolve the increasing crisis over the status of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. States Party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty undertake obligations towards non-proliferation when they ratify the Treaty, as well as benefit from rights.

3. In this context, we deplore the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran has so far failed to meet its obligations under Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007). We call again on the Islamic Republic of Iran to take the steps required by the international community and made mandatory by those resolutions. The failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to take these steps, and its increasing lack of cooperation with IAEA, further undermines confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme and efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

4. The United Kingdom has taken steps with other countries in the region to establish the conditions for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Together with our European Union partners, we have carried out extensive lobbying activity to secure adherence by States in the Middle East to key non-proliferation agreements. Since the last Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we have lobbied States in the region on the question of the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the IAEA additional protocol.

5. We also recognize the impact that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has on international efforts to create a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region. The United Kingdom is committed to efforts to move the Middle East peace process forward. We are actively engaged in efforts to end the violence, build confidence and resume talks based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) and the principle of land for peace.